

SIDA, CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOTANY

Volume 9 Number 4

Dedicated to

Delzie Demaree 1889-

This issue is dedicated to Delzie Demaree in honor of his contributions to the botanical sciences. The character as well as the contributions of this individual are expressed in the following tributes from some of his associates, students, and friends.

Dr. Demaree started collecting plant specimens in 1922 when he began teaching at Hendricks College, Arkansas. His ability to collect and process over 75,000 numbers during the period of the evolution of the automobile without succumbing to the status symbol of that period is quite remarkable. He owned one 1917 Ford which he gave to his sister three weeks later. The processing of over one-third of a million sheets (based on a rough estimate of 5 duplicates per number) with a most meager budget is also incomprehensible.

In the 1950's, he donated his herbarium to SMU and this institution now has over 50,000 of his specimens. While a large portion are from Arkansas, he collected extensively in the southeastern states and Arizona, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Texas. A great portion of his field work was directed toward the research interests of fellow botanists.

During a recent visit, he was interviewed by B. L. Lipscomb and myself. This data is summarized in the Biographical Sketch.—WFM.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

PERSONAL DATA

Born In Benham, Indiana, 15 September 1889: Married Catherine Lane; 3 children.

EDUCATION

Danville High School (Central Normal College) 1912.

B.S. (Botany), Indiana University 1920.

M.S. (Botany), Chicago University 1921.

Forestry course, Yale University 1923.

Ph.D. (Botany), Stanford University 1932.

TEACHING POSITIONS

Common Schools, Benham, Indiana 1914-1915; High School, Westpoint, Indiana 1916-1917; Hendricks College 1922-26; Yale Forestry School (two summers of Dendrology) 1924-1925; University of Arkansas at Fayetteville 1926-1930; Texas Tech, Lubbock, Texas (one quarter) 1934; Monticello A&M 1936-1946; Arkansas State University at Jonesboro 1946-1953; Navajo & Hopi Indian Reservation 1953-1956; Gulf Coast Research Lab, Ocean Springs, Mississippi (3 summers) 1956-1958; Tulane University (summer field trips, 3 years).

MILITARY EXPERIENCE

U. S. Marine Corp, April 1917-May 1919, served in France, 2nd Division.

PUBLICATIONS

- Demaree, D. 1932. Plant responses to sawdust. *Proc. Indiana Acad. Sci.* 51: 125-126.
- _____. 1932. Submerging experiments with *Taxodium*. *Ecology* 13: 258-262.
- _____. 1941. Noteworthy Arkansas plants. I. *Proc. Ark. Acad.* 1: 17-19.
- _____. 1943. A catalogue of the vascular plants of Arkansas. *Taxodium* 1(1): 1-88.
- W. Carl Taylor and D. Demaree. 1979. Annotated list of the ferns and fern allies of Arkansas. *Rhodora* 81 (828): 503-548.



Delzie Demaree. Photograph taken in 1919.

DELZIE DEMAREE: A TOP-FLIGHT FIELD BOTANIST—Delzie Demaree arrived on the Stanford campus in the spring of 1930. To my knowledge, there had been no preliminary inquiries about course offerings, opportunities for advanced study, available grants, or fellowships. No one in the Botany Department knew Delzie, but he made a very favorable impression with his detailed and intimate knowledge about the plant systematics and ecology of the Reelfoot Lake region, where he had done extensive field studies. He arranged to work toward his Ph.D. under the supervision of Dr. George J. Peirce, the Department's plant physiologist.

During the winter and spring of 1930 I had experienced a trying time with a student who started on a field trip with me into Baja, California, had tired of the monotony (to him) of collecting plants, putting them into presses, changing driers periodically, and eating "camp grub." Following a short discussion, I took him back over 150 miles to Tijuana, where he caught a bus for Stanford, and I continued field work for six weeks alone.

My plans for the summer of 1930 included a collecting trip into the Sierra San Pedro Mártir, and when Delzie volunteered to go along I was delighted to have an experienced field operator as my assistant and companion. Delzie proved, on that field trip, to be one of the best field collectors and camping companions I had had from that day to this!

We left Stanford early in August, drove to Tijuana, crossed into Baja California, and on the southern outskirts of that city, left paved roads and began to drive over rocky, dusty, rutted gravel roads to San Telmo. We camped one night on the upper beach near Cape Colnett, where Delzie was fascinated by the intricate branching and intertwining of the tentacle-like huge holdfasts of giant kelps that washed ashore. He examined several of them, noting the structure and interrelationships of the tendrils to the rocks to which they were attached, and the numerous marine organisms that dwelt within the tangled masses.

At San Telmo we turned east and drove over an even rougher, steeper, road to Meling's Ranch. There we learned that the Meling family was living in their summer Cattle Camp at La Encantada in the high Sierra San Pedro Mártir, and that there were not enough pack and saddle animals at the foothill ranch to engage for the trip into the mountains. Only an elderly Indian and a dwarf vaquero were at the ranch. After some dickering, Chapito, the vaquero, consented to let me walk along with his pack string as he returned to the summer camp with fresh supplies for the Melings and their vaqueros. I hoped thereby to strike a bargain with Salve Meling for pack and saddle animals to transport Delzie and me, with our camping and collecting gear, to the mountain camp an uncertain distance from the valley ranch. Chapito would say only that the Cattle Camp was only "poco lejos"—a short distance—from the Rancho.

There seemed to be no alternative to the hike, so Delzie agreed to stay at the Rancho and collect anything that looked interesting during the two

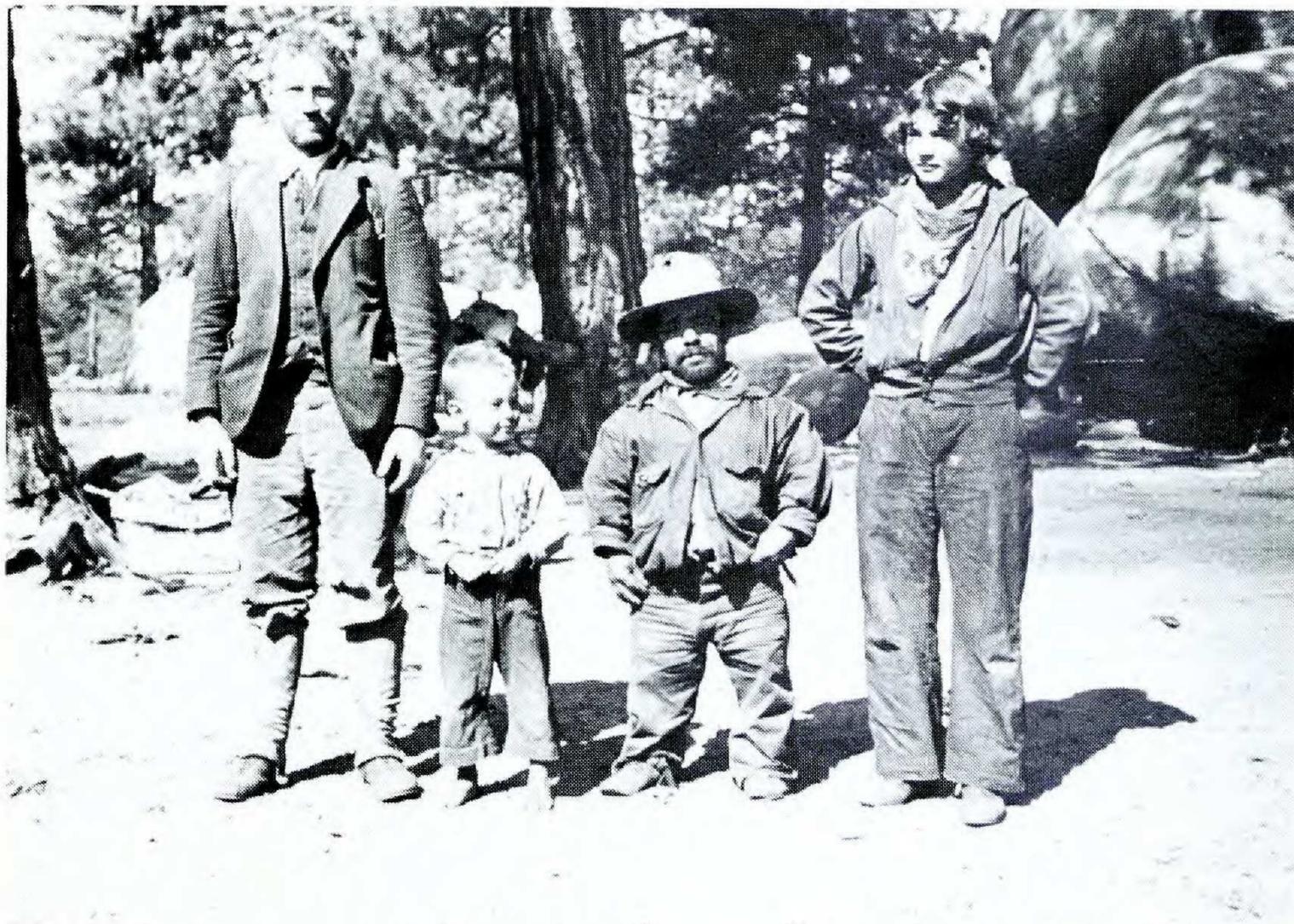


Delzie Demaree with holdfast complex of *Nereocystis* on beach near Point Colnett.

days required for me to make the round trip to the Cattle Camp. Accordingly, Chapito and I left before sunrise the next morning, he riding at the head of a string of half a dozen pack animals laden with fresh roasting ears, string beans, potatoes, chili peppers, apples, peaches, and other supplies from the Meling's garden and orchard. I walked at the tail end of the string. Chapito gave the animals an hours of rest at Los Encinos while he brewed a cup of coffee for his lunch. Again he assured me that it was "poco lejos" from Los Encinos to the summer camp. We reached it at 7:30 that evening!

Delzie kept his promise about collecting, for he had a good number of sheets in press when we returned the next day. Chapito came along to serve as guide and packer when all three of us rode on the way in to the mountain camping area of La Encantada. Delzie had done little horseback riding, so the 35 mile ride to La Encantada was not too comfortable for him, but he complained not one whit about the discomfort of the saddle.

During the following month we explored the country within a radius of five or six miles, and from a level of about 7,200 feet above sea level to the top of a ridge overlooking the San Felipe Desert and across to the highest peak in Baja California, El Picacho del Diablo. During every day, where ever we explored the ridges, canyons, and meadows, Delzie keenly observed the plants. He had a remarkable memory of minute details of floral and foliar structures, and it was he who noted the characteristics separating *Draba demareei* from other species of that genus, some of the distinctive features of *Cupressus montana* and of *Ophiocephalus angustifolius*. He walked mile after mile during our exploration of the mountainous terrain, never complaining about the physical strain entailed. His long hikes free of complaints were remarkable, for he had suffered a serious wound to a foot during action in France during World War I, and had been gassed during the same period of military service.



Delzie Demaree, Andrew Meling, Chapito, and Mary Meling at Meling's summer camp at La Encantada, Sierra San Pedro Mártir, Baja California.

Delzie examined the intriguing expulsion of the mucilaginous-coated seeds into the air when the twig upon which the parasite grew was vibrated by a passing breeze or by the touch of a bird or mammal. He watched the explosive action of ripe fruits of the pine mistletoe, *Arceuthobium campylopodium*, whenever we were at our camp, so by the end of our stay he had enough first hand information about the distances that seeds were propelled, how they stuck to twigs, and the manner in which the germinating roots entered tissues of the host, to have written an informative account of that mistletoe. He also compared the pith and vascular tissues of the native grape with similar structures of wild grapes in the central U. S.

Delzie knew so much about native plants in the Mississippi Valley that he frequently discussed the similarities of some species and the wide differences among those of other families. He accurately remembered the appearances of each plant he collected, so he immediately recognized any species he had not previously collected in our area.

Upon our return to Stanford he helped me get all our specimens ready for distribution—in sharp contrast to the manner in which some aides had avoided such work after completion of a field foray. His work with Dr. Peirce kept him fully occupied, so I had few opportunities to discuss "systematics" with him during the rest of his stay at Stanford, yet when he returned to Arkansas he again turned to collecting herbarium specimens!

Delzie did most of his field work by taking a bus to an area, then walking many miles, carrying his press in a back-pack, staying at modest motels or sleeping in the woods. He knew the discomfort of attacks by chiggers and ticks, days of high temperatures and high humidity, of occasional violent storms, and chilly nights. Yet he persisted in his study of native plants. Less than ten years ago he wrote that his collection numbers had risen into the 66,000's!! Such a high number is reached by few botanists, especially by one who operated with as few mechanized facilities as did Delzie.

He was, and is, a confirmed optimist, a cheerful individual, one who rarely shows anger, and takes each day as it comes. He helped me immeasurably during our tour together, and I am glad to still call him "A Top-flight Field Botanist"!—*Ira L. Wiggins, Professor Emeritus, Stanford University.*

Dr. Delzie Demaree is a most unusual man, and it is an honor to be asked to join in a tribute to him. It is fitting that Sida be the vehicle.

I doubt that there is a field botanist in the south or southwest that does not know Dr. Demaree or at least know of his work. A good way to learn the scope of that work is to visit SMU, where the bulk of his collections is represented. One may find there that Demaree's field experience encompasses most of the United States, particularly the southern parts from California to the Atlantic, with a concentration on Arkansas, state of his personal choice and longest residence. The specimens are mainly of excellent

quality and quantity, the documentation most useful once one understands the unique and pithy character of the collector.

Many have gotten into the field with Dr. Demaree, and those of us who have hold very good memories. My own impressions have been that he is a fountain of field lore and pungent commentary on botany and botanists, has a humor that blankets the present and the past honestly, indiscriminately, and kindly. He has been a true friend to anyone who likes field work with plants. While he may not be cited much in titles of literature on plants of the South, he is very much present in that literature—sometimes credited, often not. In that taxonomists still have to shape their ideas around specimens, and because Demaree has been such an avid and productive collector for more than half a century, he will be remembered long and well.

In Dr. Demaree we are reminded of what it is to be true to the primary ideal. For many years he has done what he wants to do, to get out and see the country he loves, to gain the knowledge that comes with close field experience, to put good information into the hands of those who can pass it along. He is what he is, and we have all gained by that. He might be quite surprised to know how much we like him for doing just what he has wanted to do for all these years!!—*Bob Kral, Biology Department, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37235.*

I'll never forget the first time I saw Dr. Demaree. It was during the summer of 1964, and I had been working at the Science/Engineering Library at SMU for only a couple of months. Filing those cards at the Circulation Desk is a dull job at best, so I glanced up everytime the front door opened.

This time I was rewarded—for in walked a real field botanist, loaded down with bag and baggage and a tremendous plant press—and a laugh in his own good natured voice. I was especially interested to learn that he had come from my state and knew a number of my old friends.

I looked forward to Dr. Demaree's visits to the Herbarium, for he kept me up to date on the hickory nut crop in Arkansas and the developing colors of the autumn leaves.

Dr. Demaree is truly a remarkable and entertaining man: I wish there were more like him.—*Mary H. Wathern, 3632 Haynie Avenue, Dallas, TX 75205.*

OLD SCRATCH—It seems as if Delzie Demaree must have been around forever. After all I have in my possession the gift of the helmet and gas mask dating from his military service in France during World War I, before I was born. I have known him myself all my professional life, which totals more than three decades. Known to many as Old Scratch, he has always been devoted to the collection and study of plants, much interested in helping others with similar interests. He has been especially active in sending specimens to students of special groups or professionals for critical identification and enjoyed keeping, even comparing, lists of determinations. I have

heard him recount early experiences related to botany at the University of Chicago and at Stanford, as well as stories and incidents pertaining to early botanists and plant enthusiasts from Arkansas to New York and New Mexico.

Dr. Demaree is notorious. He led classes fearlessly through forest, field, marsh, and stream. He was known to stomp a rattlesnake or moccasin in the safety of his laced up, knee high leather boots. He was even known to catch poisonous snakes occasionally with his bare hands while holding them underfoot. He enjoyed an old fashioned coon hunt and could stay out all night, after a hard day of collecting plants, listening the the bark of the hounds in pursuit, their howl when the fleeing animal was treed. On field trips he collected plants by the scores, duplicates of some up to twenty—any kind of plant: big, medium or small; tree, wildflower or weed. He had no use for a vasculum, often ridiculing another's use of that ungainly contrivance. He collected plants in a cardboard box, held by a belt-like strap, if he did not press the plants on the spot in his rugged, beat-up field press. Plenty of cool drinking water was his main requirement on hot field trips and he often spent long hours at night processing plants not pressed in the field. He rarely ever delayed taking care of the material collected, being prompt to number, press and dry the specimens and to document the collection data. He discarded newspapers printed with comic strips. He reasoned that to use comics for pressing plants was to tempt an hourly wage earner, the mounter, to stop work to read, or better re-read the comics, whereas to discard them was to avoid this temptation. Surely Dr. Demaree deserves a share in Trailways and Greyhound by now, for these represent the principal means by which he travelled all over the country, often pulling the cord to signal the driver he wanted to get off in the middle of nowhere, wherever he happened to see plants he wanted to collect. After collecting them, he'd simply wait for the next bus.

To relate one incident will suffice to illustrate his interest in helping aspiring plant taxonomists, an incident involving me. It occurred in the early developmental years of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory at Ocean Springs, Mississippi. I had known Dr. Demaree only two or three years when this incident occurred, having originally made his acquaintance at the Laboratory while collecting and identifying plants in the vicinity as an instructor from Mississippi State.

One day after a hard field trip in the pineland savannas Dr. Demaree asked me if I would lend him ten dollars. I tried to conceal my surprise, for I was certain he knew that something like a total of ten dollars was all I had between me and starvation. I was a graduate student at Duke at the time, collecting *Marshallia* plants from Durham to Miami and westward to Ocean Springs. We'd just located and collected some of the plants for the first time in Jackson County, Mississippi, next to the Alabama line. We'd been out in my fifty-dollar 1939 Plymouth. It was souped up with ply-wood



Delzie Demaree with a plant of *Helianthus annuus* L. subsp. *lenticularis* (Dougl.) Cockerell near Santo Tomas, Baja California.

fender skirts and rubber mudguards and burned oil mightily, giving off a blue smoke not unlike the insecticide mist emitted from fogging vehicles used along the coast for control of mosquitoes. One of the four paper-thin tires had gone flat and we had to change it, using in its place an even worse one from the trunk, one with a knot on the side but still inflated. Anyway, upon being asked for the loan, I thought to myself: "That old man has been good to me. He's helped me to key out some hard-to-identify plants in Small's Manual and has taught me scores of plants in the field." Nevertheless, I was very dubious. After all, I thought: "What was he going

to do with the money and where did he go"? It was common knowledge around the Laboratory that periodically Dr. Demaree would mysteriously disappear a couple of times per week for several hours, even a half day at a time. About this there was much speculation but no real explanation. So, naturally, I was not particularly enthusiastic about lending him ten dollars, which, incidentally, was carefully folded and hidden among my belongings for use in an emergency or for hard times.

Dubious as I was concerning the loan request, somehow I couldn't say no. I couldn't even bring myself to ask Dr. Demaree for what purpose he needed the money. In something like a spirit of resignation, I dug out the bill and gave it to him.

That was a mistake, I concluded the next day when suddenly I was struck with the realization that Dr. Demaree was nowhere to be found. He'd disappeared! Naturally, I was concerned and a bit uneasy all that day and being preoccupied couldn't get much done, thinking as I did about the fate of my ten dollars and whether or not I'd ever see it again or Dr. Demaree himself for that matter.

Our work space at the Laboratory was a screened in 'bird cage', a substantial structure built over a slab of poured concrete. It had a roof of slate matching that of a three-story residence house near by, was equipped with hinged windows that could be propped up or let down. This lab was originally a sitting room accompanying the big house and was located near the entrance gate underneath a gigantic live oak tree, dripping with luxuriant festoons of Spanish Moss. We'd built work benches and plant driers on the inside of three walls, a door occupying the fourth.

Late in the afternoon, about dusk, I was laboring over the identity of a certain *Rhynchospora* in this cage when I heard Dr. Demaree's characteristic voice calling, "Channell, Channell, Channell." He was coming in the front gate on foot, leather boots laced up to his knees. He call my name repeatedly. I was anxious to know what he wanted and rushed out toward him supposing something to have gone wrong. As I approached him, he held out his hands revealing several bills of various denominations, some tens, a twenty, fives, all sort of crumpled up. To my surprise and dismay, I presently learned he'd been across the bridge from Ocean Spring to Biloxi where he'd visited the bookies, had bet on the horses, and won enough money with my ten dollars to buy new tires all way round for my oil-burning Plymouth! Finally, I had an explanation for his disappearances, which I acknowledged as he smiled knowingly. I also realized he hadn't really needed ten dollars but somehow was testing me by asking for it to judge whether or not I would gamble on lending it to him.

I enjoyed many field trips in that old car on Dr. Demaree's tires, sometimes with Dr. Demaree, who never drove a car himself, but was always ready to bear or share the expenses of travel in someone else's car, that someone being a fellow botanist, a naturalist, conservationist or aspiring

taxonomist with whom he wished to associate and whom he wished to help.

This issue of *Sida* could not hold the countless stories and incidents related to this grand old man that I could tell. He is indeed, a phenomenon, a friend of plants of all kinds, an enthusiastic collector—Old Scratch, as he often signed his letters, which meant among other things that he was always ready to go, 'to scratch gravel' as he put, to go collecting. He is the last of another era of botanists, one of a kind, and yet ageless, even now much like he was when I first met him, full of stories and reminiscences and always pronouncing the doom of botany, which is his way of looking at the changes through which the subject has gone.—*R. B. Channell, Department of General Biology, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37235.*

Delzie "Arkansas" Demaree brings to mind a verdict heard from a colleague: "He's a compulsive collector." Have we need of him? His counterpart is the rarity runner. Systematics needs both, but profits most from the compulsive collector. He does not selectively seek but amply samples. And samples best record the story. Not forgetting, Delzie, your twinkling blue eyes or zest for corn pone and gravy, or your yarns aborning; we have profited from your enthusiasm for that old plant press.—*Joseph Ewan, Biology Department, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA 70118.*

Dear Dr. Demaree: It is a pleasure to salute you on the happy occasion of the dedication of this issue of *SIDA* to you. Through your long years you have made a magnificent contribution to our understanding of the plants of North America, starting with your exploration of the mountain ranges of northern California and extending throughout the Southwest and South.

No student of the plants of these areas can achieve an appropriate level of understanding without access to your ample collections, which reflect so clearly your detailed knowledge of these plants.

Therefore, on this occasion it is most fitting and proper for us to salute you and to thank you for your fine accomplishments, which have been such a marvelous contribution for us all.—*Peter H. Raven, Director, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, MO 63166.*

IN TRIBUTE TO DELZIE DEMAREE—The scope of Delzie Demaree's influence on students of botany is indicated by a coincidence that occurred on the day that the letter arrived from the editor of *Sida* notifying me of plans to dedicate this issue to him. That same day, Stewart Ware of the biology department at the College of William and Mary was taking a visiting botanist, Dr. John DeTurck of Cabrini College, Radnor, Pa., on a tour of the College Woods. In the course of their walk, Dr. DeTurck inquired whether his guide knew Delzie Demaree. Upon receiving an affirmative response, DeTurck launched into reminiscences of how 20 years ago Demaree had been so generous in supplying him with specimens of the group he was revising, *Oenothera* section *Kneiffia*, and how Demaree had put him through rigorous

paces in their quest in the field as well. He mentioned, too, the bundles of *Oenothera* that had appeared periodically in his mail during the years that followed, these from the same indefatigable source. This story could be retold tens of times simply by changing the name of the botanist and the genus.

My own first encounter with Dr. Demaree was as an undergraduate at Southwest Missouri State College when he came to guide Paul Redfearn, Jack Sharp, and me on a field trip to the boot-heel of Missouri to see *Leitneria*. The friendship that began that day punctuated my graduate school years at Vanderbilt with shipments of *Valerianella* and with Demaree-brand field trips to Arkansas. To this day, his most recent collections of *Valerianella* continue to arrive in cutdown fruit or poultry boxes tied with binder twine. These specimens are pressed in newspapers current to the day of collection, and never in the comic pages (lest these tempt herbarium workers from their task). The specimen labels also bear his distinctive touch, with such informative exclamations as, "A fine patch!" appended to the basic field data. Underneath the bundle of plant specimens all manner of surprises may await, from perhaps a fine specimen of Arkansas gypsum or novaculite to selected newspaper clippings and jokes reflecting the Demaree philosophy. A recent clipping announced, "The greatest undeveloped territory in the world lies between your ears!"

Dr. Demaree is not only a botanical phenomenon, but this peppery ex-Marine is also a paradigm of plain toughness. However, it may not be reasonable to use his example as a standard; surely he is made of tougher stuff than most of us. He credits his vigor in part to daily inhibition of large quantities of ice-cold water, particularly mineral water from Hot Springs, and to abstinence from all milk products and from carbonated soft drinks, "fizz water" in his words. Each fall he purchases a "big ticket" on Trailways that allows unlimited travel over a period of several weeks, and he crisscrosses the eastern part of the nation, hitting the Systematics Symposium at St. Louis, then visiting assorted botanist friends state by state in a giant loop. On one of these odysseys a few years ago he made a misstep and tumbled head-over-heels down the stairway of the bus. His comment as he got up (all bones intact) and brushed himself off is pure Demaree: "Every now and then a fellow needs a good jostle to straighten himself out!"

Those who know "Old Scratch," as he is prone to refer to himself, know that he is a story-teller, tease, and talker *extraordinaire*. He will talk off an arm and a leg, detailing the state of the Union, "Things are all balled up!", and the state of the Art, "There is no royal road to taxonomy!" Perhaps my favorite of his stories is about how, with a little seed money from Ben Channell, he won enough money at the race track to buy new tires for Channell's field vehicle. His reputation also includes at least one favorite tale to hold over the head of each of his friends; in my case, he has been merciless with me about the time he caught me back at the car surreptitiously eating

cookies on a field trip. That was a serious infraction of his Code of the Field! He is even-handed, though, and tells tales on himself, too—like the story about losing his geologist's hammer on a field trip, only to discover later that in the process of using it to hold down newspapers on that windy day, he had pressed it right along with the plants.

There are so many of us who have benefited from Delzie Demaree's plant specimens, his field expertise, his phenomenal memory for plant localities, and his generosity in providing field trip headquarters at his house/herbarium in Hot Springs, Ark. (now transplanted to Detroit, Tex.). His many friends also know full well that his is a willing and empathetic ear when his counsel is sought. We enjoy his steadfast friendship and benefit from his encouragement and sound advice. Not only has he made a major contribution to the growth and development of botanical knowledge through his myriad collections and other botanical pursuits, but in his interactions with students he has contributed greatly to the professional growth and development of the botanists themselves.—*Donna M. E. Ware, Department of Biology, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA 23185.*

I can recall my experiences with Dr. Demaree with ease. How lucky a few of us are to have had the opportunity to know and botanize with Dr. Demaree. My first experience goes back a little over seven years when I arrived in Dallas to fill the herbarium botanist position at SMU. Six days later I met him. I arrived at school about 8:30 a.m. and Dr. Demaree was waiting in his wool coat with his suit case and a full plant press. For the life of me, I had no idea who he was, but it didn't take long to find out. "My goodness, here it is, middle of the morning, and the herbarium still not open. I've had my breakfast and coffee and have been sitting here on these steps for two hours. When do you people go to work around here?" We went into the herbarium to carry on our conversation. Since then, we have been on several field trips together. The experience and fun I had with him in Arkansas was tremendous. Traveling down the road, he called out names of plants, places, habitats, people and everything else imaginable. He said, "Pull over around the bend. There's a little store we can stop at and get something to wet our throat." Sure enough, the store appeared around the bend. We went in and the first thing I heard was "Hello Dr. Demaree, how are the plants doing?"

Dr. Demaree, thank you for sharing so freely a part of your life with me. I look forward to every visit with you at the herbarium.—*Barney Lipscomb, Herbarium, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX 75275.*

He never taught me botany, but when I really needed it, he taught me wisdom. We met, by pre-arrangement, at a bus stop in the middle of my mid-life crisis and he rescued me by being his eighty-nine year old enthusiastic, determined self.

With all my spent and wasted ambition to create and demonstrate vital new world-changing technology, there I was spending days with a nineteenth century man, playing at taxonomy, a nineteenth century science. What Delzie let me experience, however, was his nineteenth century Thoreau-like value that let him be unabashedly happy picking weeds for plant



Delzie Demaree. Photograph taken in Lower California at the Hamilton Ranch in 1930.

morgues over the world. The image of Delzie, his boots, his fifty dollar "takes-me-anywhere-all-year" bus ticket, and his plant press, sucking in the joy of life and living sumptuously on next to nothing, still energizes my batteries and will; until I forget that a weed can be beautiful.

We spent hours not talking about politics, justice, business, esthetics, and people; talking weeds and ideas about weeds made much more sense.—
Anonymous.

MY YEARS WITH DELZIE¹—Posterity will see Delzie Demaree through the eyes of herbarium labels. Frankly, I believe this thought will do Delzie "real proud."

PLANTS OF ARKANSAS
COASTAL PLAIN REGION
Collected by DELZIE DEMAREE
Lafayette County

Carya texana Buckl.

30 in. D.B.H. Near June Lake. Last year no fruit.

This year loaded.

P.O. Stamps.

Elevation ft. 274.

Date 5-31-1975

No. 69592

There will never be any doubt where Demaree specimens were collected. Each one has its name, rank and serial number as you would expect from an ex-marine who traces his lineage back through twelve family members who have served since 1883 (3-30-69). One might question the insistence of tying collections to the closest post office in the same county, but no one will ever argue with his forester's eye for woody plants.

"You must see this region. It is not like anything that [I] have seen. Soil could not be better and pecan trees (wild) 2-3 ft. DBH with 3-4 saw longs to a limb."
(7-23-62)

This man known to me affectionately as "Old Scratch" epitomizes the Arkansas Traveler. From the time I first met Dr. Demaree at the Association of Southern Biologists meeting, Loyola University of New Orleans in April 1960 (5-25-60), I found him rarin' to go.

"I will be ready to scratch gravel on Oct. 14 [1961] for a week." (9-5-61)

And over the years he maintained his traveling momentum with the \$99/99 day Trailways special.

"Let's make this a good tour of Ark. then a run around Okla., Mo., Ill., Ky., and wind up at Nashville (Tenne.)." (7-23-62)

"I am leaving tonight for Ariz.—Oreg.—Wash.—Corvallis. My speed back will depend on when we can start our nutty trip." (7-23-62)

¹ Bracketed dates refer to letters received from Delzie Demaree.

"Will meet you anyplace at anytime." (9-15-61)

"Before it is postmarked I will be on the way to pay U a visit. Schedule. Dallas—Flag—Vegas—L.A.—Miami—Vero Beach—Durham—Indianapolis—H.S. I will see you about the end of Nov. I want to get some *Hamamelis*. No big trips. I am on a \$99 for 99 days." (10-21-63)

"Tijuana, Mexico. Got lost and am here after 2500 miles. On my way to Duke." (11-16-63)

What Delzie enjoyed most on these travels was sharing his knowledge about life and plants with students along the way and getting out in the field and bailing hay.

"They hit some good places, i.e. 50 numbers in two hours." (11-5-62)

"I am sending you 10 labels to make into sets of about 10. Your typing on your typewriter is very fine." (1-10-64)

As he was approaching the 47,000th collection number in the fall of 1962, his years of experience showed.

"I am now indexing my Ark. Plants on 4X cards and something is showing up. NOTHING. These plants can't read and just grow any old place." (12-17-62)

Perhaps the most unsettling aspect of his years of botanizing is the frustrating thought that it might have all been for naught.

"I never was so sick to see a place all messed up. Where they could contribute in taxonomy they are messing with ecology and physiology." (12-22-62)

"Taxonomy—the specimen way—is about out. No one working on them." (3-30-69)

"Taxonomy is so low that you have to reach up to touch bottom. Latest is that the Stanford Herbarium will go to the Cal. Acad. Science. You will be able to buy small herbaria for the price of the cases as old junk." (4-5-69)

A good flowering and fruiting year and plenty of ice tea has always been sufficient to bolster Delzie's spirits and bring out the best in sage advice.

"If there is no complex then there is no problem." (12-11-60)

"My gambling stops on Armistice Day. When your letter arrived in Vegas I was in Flag. You probably know less about horses than you do *Carya*. Probably several question what I know about horses and wonder that I do as well as I do. No doubt some wonder why a nut like you knows as much about *Carya* as you do. I don't play horses I play chart. I find something or some track that win under some standard way. I locate this and play until they win. For instance I got \$93 bucks in one dollar bet. I tried to hit the big Internation[al] Race thinking the Russians might win it. I could not play old Kelso. He won and did not pay anything. I have caught some good ones on that big race when they win. I play parlays. That is one horse on the nose and all that goes on the next horse. You get some good payoffs. . . ." (11-26-64)

"Now this is where I made my mistake on oaks and hickories. Foster [Adriance S.] told me about 1928 or 9 that if I would collect only the oaks & hickories in Ark., science would never ask anymore of me. I did not do that good." (3-26-76)

I beg to disagree and so do his many amateur plant collector friends in



Dr. Delzie Demaree, 12 Jun 1973, tightening his plant press on Rich Mountain, Polk County, Arkansas.

Hot Springs who held a "Delzie Demaree Day" in commemoration of his 85th birthday on September 14, 1974. But as they said, "For those who may not be able to attend, Dr. Demaree's birthday is really the Fifteenth of September." Dr. Delzie Demaree is in many ways a remarkable man. Adverse to publish or perish and reticent to have his words subject to taxonomic quibblings, nevertheless he has provided future generations with a wealth of unequivocal scientific data sets—the herbarium sheet in all its glory. And for those curious curators who take time to examine the newspaper wrappings, they derive the added benefit of current events at the time and place of collection. Delzie has a penchant for using local papers for pressing specimens throughout his peripatetic range. Is this just another one of those idiosyncrasies, or is this the professor's way of saying,

"I thot I had better wise you up a little." (11-2-62)

—*Donald E. Stone, Department of Botany, Duke University, Durham, NC 27706.*

It is with great pleasure that we at Trailways join with you in extending Dr. Delzie Demaree our very best wishes.

During Dr. Demaree's long and illustrious career he has traveled extensively throughout the United States. We at Trailways feel fortunate to have carried Dr. Demaree more than 200,000 miles on a number of his fact and specimen finding excursions.

We trust that Dr. Demaree will continue traveling and enjoying the natural beauty of this country for many years to come. And we hope that when Dr. Demaree plans a trip we can continue to be of service to such a valued and respected individual.—*Harry J. Lesko, President—Trailways, Inc., 1500 Jackson Street, Dallas, Texas 75201.*